

Maj. Gen. Tom Katkus
Commissioner/
Adjutant General
P.O. Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500
www.dmva.alaska.gov



Office of Public Affairs
Main: 907-428-6031
mvapublicaffairs@alaska.gov
PO Box 5800, Camp Denali
Ft Richardson, Alaska 99505-5800

PRESS RELEASE

Alaska National Guard

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 5, 2014

By: Sgt. Balinda O'Neal

Alaska Air Guardsmen rescue injured Iditarod musher

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — Airmen with the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th, 211th and 212th Rescue Squadrons rescued an injured Iditarod musher 61 miles southeast of McGrath, March 4.

The Alaska Rescue Coordination Center was notified around 7 p.m. via volunteers on the Iditarod trail that a musher had been injured while attempting to collect a loose dog.

The Alaska RCC immediately began evaluating the weather and assets available, and ultimately requested the 176th Wing, Alaska Air National Guard, to respond to the incident because of the Alaska Air National Guard's ability to fly at night in deteriorating weather.

The Guard responded by launching an HC-130 King aircraft from the 211th Rescue Squadron and an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter from the 210th Rescue Squadron, each with a team of Guardian Angel rescue personnel from the 212th Rescue Squadron on board, shortly after 8 p.m. from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

After several attempts to find a safe flying route, the helicopter refueled inflight and was successful in finding a safe route that had been scouted by the HC-130.

"They encountered poor weather almost immediately," said Senior Master Sgt. Robert Carte, superintendent of the Alaska RCC, Alaska Air National Guard. "The volunteers on the ground did a great job of initially treating the survivor and preparing the site for a helicopter landing."

Without the help from good Samaritans the musher may have not been so lucky, Carte added.

The musher was located at 11 p.m. and delivered to a local Anchorage hospital in stable condition approximately one hour later.

"It shows great team effort by the men and women of the 176th Wing to quickly respond and safely return this civilian," Carte said. "They are continually performing to the high standards expected of them."

The members of the 210th, 211th and 212th Rescue Squadrons were awarded one save for the mission.

###